for their helpleſs younger children, yet have plumed themſelves on their unſullied reputation, as if the whole compaſs of their duty as wives and mothers was only to preſerve it. Whilſt other indolent women neglecting every perſonal duty, have thought that they deſerved their huſbands' affection, becauſe they acted in this reſpect with propriety.

Weak minds are always fond of reſting in the ceremonials of duty, but morality offers much ſimpler motives; and it were to be wiſhed that ſuperficial moraliſts had ſaid leſs reſpecting behaviour, and outward obſervances, for unleſs virtue, of any kind, is built on knowledge, it will only produce a kind of inſipid decency. Reſpect for the opinion of the world, has, however, been termed the principal duty of woman in the moſt expreſs words, for Rouſſeau declares, 'that reputation is no leſs indiſpenſable than chaſtity.' 'A man,' adds he, 'ſecure in his own good conduct, depends only on himſelf, and may brave the public opinion; but a woman, in behaving well, performs but half her duty; as what is thought of her, is as important to her as what ſhe really is. It follows hence, that the ſyſtem of a woman's

'man's education ſhould, in this reſpect, be 'directly contrary to that of ours. Opinion 'is the grave of virtue among the men; but 'its throne among women.' It is ſtrictly logical to infer that the virtue that reſts on opinion is merely worldly, and that it is the virtue of a being to whom reaſon has been denied. But, even with reſpect to the opinion of the world, I am convinced that this claſs of reaſoners are miſtaken.

This regard for reputation, independent of its being one of the natural rewards of virtue, however, took its riſe from a cauſe that I have already deplored as the grand ſource of female depravity, the impoſſibility of regaining reſpectability by a return to virtue, though men preſerve theirs during the indulgence of vice. It was natural for women then to endeavour to preſerve what once loſt—was loſt for ever, till this care ſwallowing up every other care, reputation for chaſtity, became the one thing needful to the ſex. But vain is the ſcrupuloſity of ignorance, for neither religion nor virtue, when they reſide in the heart, require ſuch a puerile attention to mere ceremonies, becauſe the behaviour muſt, upon

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